

Workforce & Career Development Division

Director's Corner

November was an usually busy month with several major milestones met.

First, the successful implementation of the SKIES Technology Upgrade (STU) project impacted all of our system partners. Thank you so much for your patience as ESD worked through some minor bugs. I would like to thank Joanie Linder, your state SKIES Training Coordinator, for the number of hours she worked with the conversion team testing and assisting users with accessing the new platform after launch. This project was an excellent example of system-wide teamwork!

Secondly, Alberto Isiordia, Daniel Valdez and Candee Bellamy from our Agriculture unit (a.k.a. "the H-2A squad") planned and executed an outstanding training for Washington state employers in Wenatchee.

Finally, I have to recognize the retirement of Ken Koernke from the WorkFirst program. As many of you know, Ken has been a cornerstone for our piece of that program for many years. Fortunately, as we bid goodbye to a trusted colleague and friend, we welcome a new program manager in Linda Venera, who has already hit the ground running.

I can't even begin to address all the success stories we hear each week about the many service delivery teams working on projects that will help us leverage resources and enhance service delivery for the benefit of our shared customers. Again, I can't tell you all enough what a privilege it is to be part of this division and the WorkSource system.

~Sandy Miller

SKIES Technology Upgrade Launches Successfully

On November 17th, the SKIES Technology Upgrade (STU), a long project to upgrade SKIES (the statewide MIS) from Oracle to SQL technology, rolled out statewide with a relatively small number of issues post-launch. Issues mainly involved passwords. While work is currently underway to procure a brand new job search and case management system, this important upgrade to SKIES improves stability of the existing system until the new system launches. Many thanks to the dedicated network of statewide SKIES trainers for ensuring system users were prepared for the changes, to the team of Employment Security Department's (ESD) IT professionals, help desk staff and Joanie Linder, ESD's SKIES Training Coordinator, for diligently testing STU's many components, triaging new launch-related issues the week of November 17th, and for communicating effectively with system users.

Upcoming Shared Work Promote and Enroll Grant Webinars

ESD's Shared Work unit is hosting a series of hour-long webinars to educate and update local WorkSource system staff on ESD's recent Shared Work Promote and Enroll Grant, including changes to the employer incentives. The target audience for the webinars is Workforce Development Council (WDC) and ESD's regional directors, administrators, business and marketing designees, and others who routinely engage employers and employer groups in the course of their work. The webinars are designed to help the WorkSource system accurately and effectively market and promote the program to employer stakeholders and customers. For webinar dates and times, please see the December Scheduled Events section on page 2 of this newsletter. If you did not receive the e-mail invitation directly and would like to participate in one of the webinars, please contact Shelly Calkins in ESD's Shared Work Program (scalkins@esd.wa.gov or 360-407-2320) for WebEx sign-on information.

PY2013 WIA Title 1-B Annual Report Submitted

Washington submitted its Program Year 2013 (PY13) Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title I-B annual report to the U. S. Department of Labor (USDOL) on November 14th. The annual performance report, which was produced through a collaboration between ESD, the Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board (WTECB) and the 12 Workforce Development Councils (WDCs), is available on WTECB's website.

Wenatchee H-2A Employer Forum a Success

ESD's Agricultural Services unit, in partnership with USDOL's Wage & Hour Division and the Washington State Department of Agriculture and with strong support from Washington Farm Labor Association (WAFLA), hosted an event for the state's H-2A employers in Wenatchee on November 14th. Approximately 110 people attended, including both current and interested H-2A employers. The purpose of the event was to help growers navigate the H-2A program, elevate the WorkSource system's presence with growers, and encourage them to use the system as a resource. Stronger communications can only result in better job matches and fewer findings in H-2A applications. Attendees indicated the forum was a value-added event and encouraged future events like this.

Inslee Awards YouthWorks Funding

Governor Inslee, while in Spokane on November 20th, announced the awarding of approximately \$1.96 million to the state's 12 Workforce Development Councils and their partners for the YouthWorks project. The funds come from a combination of WIA 3.75% Governor's Discretionary, Carl D. Perkins, and WIA 5% Administration funds. Together with their respective consortia of school district, skill center, out-of-school, employer, and non-profit partners, the WDCs will use the awards to better prepare disadvantaged in-school and out-of-school youth for careers or further education in preparation for careers through focused planning, preparation, experience and placement over a two-year period. The program's impact will be further boosted by the commitment of an almost equal amount of non-affiliated leveraged funding. For more information on the YouthWorks project and local awards, please see the [Governor's news release](#).

House Committee to Hear Workforce System Reports

The House Labor and Workforce Development Committee will receive several reports from the Employment Security Department (ESD) and Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB) at a committee work session scheduled for December 4th at 1:30 p.m. Report outs will include ESD procedures related to the H-2A program, an update on the Agricultural Labor Workgroup staffed by ESD, the WorkFirst/WIA outcomes and flow of funds report produced by ESD, and the 2014 Workforce Training Results by WTECB.

New Policy Guidance

None this month.

December 2014 Featured Events

Shared Work Promote and Enroll Grant Webinars

Dec. 9, 11:00-12:00 p.m.
Dec. 10, 1:30-2:30 p.m.
Dec. 11, 9:00-10:00 a.m.

*See Shared Work article
on page 1 of this
newsletter for WebEx
contact.*

*Happy Thanksgiving to
you and yours!*



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